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NEW THEATRE MAGAZINE

JOHN ALLEN - GLYNNE WICKHAM

CYRIL WOOD

H. L. MILLIARD - F. H. MARES - REGINALD SALBERG

Interview with Arnold Wesker

NUMBER 3 2/- APRIL 1960

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'Increased means and increased leisure are the two civilizers of man'

—DISRAELI

WHEN this was written, means and leisure were the guarded birthright of the few. Now social progress, linked with scientific advancement, are giving 'increased means and increased leisure' to more and more people. The Labour Party, proud of its part in making this possible, and aware that much still remains to be done, now plans to give everyone greater opportunity in living and leisure. Will increased leisure become a soulless vacuum between periods of work, or will it become a source of satisfying participation in sport, the arts, and other creative outlets? This is the question asked and answered in the Labour Party's publication *Leisure for Living.*

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The Young Audience

Repertory in Salisbury

A Playhouse for Cheltenham

Cardiff Revisited

THE EDITORS

THE Capital Without a Theatre, an article published in our January issue, investigated the decline of Cardiff's professional theatre over the past few years, and suggested that a vigorous, fully professional theatre would only be restored to Cardiff when the City Council approved the building of a Municipal playhouse.

The reaction in Cardiff to this suggestion unhappily appears to confirm the opinion that the city as a whole is prepared to do little towards obtaining a theatre suitable for the needs of a capital city, and that the City Council is prepared only to discuss a compromise solution, resolutely refusing to acknowledge the dangers inherent in any compromise.

Despite the considerable publicity in the Cardiff press given to the proposals in *The Capital Without a Theatre,* there are still no indications that Cardiff City Council is prepared even to consider the possibility of building a full-scale municipal theatre, and —what is perhaps even more depressing— no signs that those who would like to see such a theatre in their city are prepared to combine and make themselves heard. Instead, an alternative scheme, few details of which are available to the general public, appears to be under active consideration. This is a plan to build a theatre seating "about 400 people," to be used partly by students of the Cardiff College of Music and Drama, and partly by "a professional group who would be in residence four months of the year." These are the words of Mr. Raymond Edwards, Principal of the College of Music and Drama, as quoted in the *Western Mail* of January 11th, following publication of *The Capital Without a Theatre.* "Such a building," claimed Mr. Edwards, "Would be a dramatic reservoir into which talents of old students from the College will flow."

Mr. Edwards's enthusiasm for a project which can bring nothing but credit to the College of Drama of which he is principal, is understandable and even commendable. But Mr. Edwards is further reported as saying, "A theatre seating about 400 people would be quite big enough for the time being. Cardiff is not yet ready for a seven-course dramatic meal, but that does not mean she should have no food at all." We would ask all those concerned with Cardiff's theatre problems to question the argument that a small theatre must first be built in order to develop an audience large enough to support a full-scale municipal venture in the future.

In fact the situation in Cardiff bears a marked resemblance to that which prevailed in Leicester a few months ago. There, too, a scheme had been put forward for a "cheap" theatre; there, too, the argument was raised that a modern city cannot support a full-scale theatre. The major flaw in such reasoning is that in the long run there is every likelihood that a small, "cheap" theatre will prove just as expensive to the community as a large, "dear" one. Councillor Milliard, whose article on Leicester's proposed civic theatre appears in this issue, describes how his City Council was persuaded to reject the scheme for a small theatre in favour of a more ambitious and a more realistic project. More realistic, because it is sounder financially. Once built, it is estimated that a full-sized theatre will cost Leicester Corporation £5,000 per annum, the equivalent of a farthing rate. Cardiff City Council surely does not imagine that a theatre whose box-office receipts would be about half those

of Leicester for four months of the year, and seemingly nil for the remaining eight, will cost the Corporation *less* than £5,000 a year.

Nor are we suggesting that the City Council is to finance the building of a larger theatre without assistance from other bodies. Elsewhere, industry has shown itself willing to give generous support to bold and imaginative ventures; and there is no reason to believe that a city in a region which is undergoing considerable industrial expansion should not be able to obtain capital towards the building of a civic theatre.

Cyril Wood, describing in this issue the birth of Cheltenham's Everyman Theatre, demonstrates how the revival of a city's theatre relies in the first place upon the enthusiasm of individuals; but he adds that such enthusiasm is useless unless it is well organised and backed by sound business experience. In Cardiff there is no lack of genuine disappointment and anger that the City has been allowed to lose its professional theatre; what is missing is a militant body capable of making this dissatisfaction vocal, and putting coherent and realistic proposals before the City Council.

It is not yet too late for Cardiff City Council to be persuaded to act as shrewdly as has Leicester. But there is a pressing need for speedy action, not only in Cardiff, but in every city and town where there is a similar state of affairs. We urge all theatre-lovers whose playhouse is closed, or threatened with closure, to read Mr. Wood's account of a theatre that will re-open in May; we urge all Councillors who believe a healthy theatre to be a necessary part of municipal life, to study the facts laid out in Councillor Milliard's article.

Question and Answer

ARNOLD WESKER

PERHAPS we could begin by looking at some of the points John Arden raised in the last issue of *New Theatre Magazine*. He asked a question which you are qualified to answer : Is there any reason to suppose that the provincial Reps are more able to make a success of a new play than any of the London theatres ?

A.W. : I should like to put that question the other way round, and ask: Is there any reason to suppose that the provincial Reps would provide a worse production than London theatres ? The answer to that is mainly economic. When one says that there's every reason to suppose that a provincial theatre *wouldn't* make as good a production as a London one, what one really means is that there aren't enough resources financially to provide for a first class company with sufficient length of time for rehearsals. Ideally what one would like to see is a provincial repertory with enough funds to maintain a company that could be rehearsing two or three plays at once, and for periods of six weeks, which is even more than most West End theatres can allow.

J.P. : How has this worked out for your own plays ? For instance, when *Roots* came to London was it rehearsed again before it went on ? Did you improve on anything there wasn't time for in Coventry ?

A.W. : The production wasn't greatly altered, but if there had been more time in Coventry then I think I might have rewritten some parts of the play, as I have since done. And Joan Plowright could have spent more time trying to get the true Norfolk dialect. She was using a Lincolnshire dialect because she found the character itself required so much work and concentration that there wasn't time to work on this and develop a new dialect. Lack of time is one of the penalties of Rep. This is *not* a criticism of the Repertory system; it is a reflection of the sad state of affairs that exists in the provinces with regard to the attitude of most local councils towards the theatre. Even in Coventry the theatre could do with more money, which would mean more time.

J.P. : The next point John Arden raises is this : "The regular audience of a Rep Theatre is often said not to like new plays as well as it does the classics, or even plays that were new in London a year or so ago." Do you think that's true ?

A.W. : You can't really make generalisations about what happens in the provinces. I don't think that the response in the provinces is very much different from that of the metropolis. I personally feel that the audiences in Coventry responded to *Roots* much better than London audiences did, because it's a provincial play, about provincial people.

J.P. : When you write a play what sort of audience do you visualise—a London or a provincial audience ? You said that people in Coventry enjoyed *Roots* because they were a provincial audience.

A.W. : It wasn't only a question of enjoying it more; it was also a question of responding in the right way. But when I write a play I don't make a division between the provinces and London; if there's any conscious approach to the audience in my writing now, it is that I try to *simplify* as much as I can; so that the audience I think is potentially there, among

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ARNOLD WESKER was interviewed at his home by Jill Pomerance.

the people who haven't hitherto gone to the theatre, will be able to understand it. Actually I think that simplification is a pretty good rule to stand by for any art; but perhaps someone like John Arden thinks in different terms. I think the difference between us is mainly a question of levels. Let's put it this way. You can make communication on all sorts of levels. You can make a communication on the level of music, or on the level of poetry; and a line in a poem could be as significant as the point of a whole short story. It's just a different method that you use to make your point. And as within poetry there's a difference between the ballad and the narrative poem, and within music between the symphony and the quartet, in drama there can be the same sort of internal difference between two types of play. John Arden would want to make his contact on a completely theatrical level—that is to say that instead of using individual characters to make their point intellectually through what they say, he will create on the stage a *situation* which is meaningful, which has in its emotional impact all the implications of a reasoned argument between two characters in another kind of play. Anne Jellicoe writes on the same sort of level in *The Sport of My Mad Mother.* There's one scene in that play where two characters are reading out the instructions from a hairdressing set. They read them and repeat them; it becomes a chant which is charged with emotion; then finally it comes to nothing. Now the same point, that the hairdressing set is no good, could have been made by a naturalistic conversation between the two characters, but Anne Jellicoe has worked up the scene in a different way; and this is the sort of difference I think there is between the way John Arden writes and the way I write. In fact I believe that there's as much of value in his approach as there is in mine. For instance, I am convinced that I have developed to the stage where I am no longer satisfied if characters in my plays are simply on the stage talking to each other, throwing their emotions all over the place. John Arden makes his point, and Anne Jellicoe makes her point; and now I am impatient with two people who do nothing more than talk to each other on the stage. What I try to have them do is *demonstrate* an idea, live it out, act it out. In fact without being aware of it I think I've always strived for this demonstrating of the point rather than talking about it; and this is why, in the first play I wrote, *The Kitchen,* there are no long patches of argument and intellectual discussion. The whole play is an attempt to recreate the atmosphere of the Kitchen in order to demonstrate a particular point. Likewise, in *Roots* the whole play is a theatrical demonstration of a point that is made in the last speech. When I have people coming on with a tin bath and sweeping up and washing up, it's not simply because I want to capture real life; what I'm trying to do is demonstrate all the little things which go to make up a point.

J.P.: Talking about realistic drama, John Arden says: "People must want to come to the theatre because of the artificiality, not despite it. I am pleading for the revival of the Poetic Drama, no less." How do you react to that?

A.W.: John Arden talks about Poetry of the Theatre, but there's a Poetry of Living as well. When two people meet each other and for no reason at all smile, as you smile at someone across a bus or sitting in the Tube, there's a sort of poetry about this. You can surely have poetry in realism as well. In *Roots,* when Beatie Bryant dances, isn't this poetry? I don't think John Arden really means this; I suppose he means

pretence. Perhaps he's saying that with the advent of the film and TV, it is necessary to do something which the screen cannot do just as well—simply create recognizable people in recognizable situations. The theatre's a place of pretence and artifice; so don't let's be ashamed about this and let's see if we can't get something out of the sheer artifice. He may be right. But let's accept the point I was making, that there is more than one way of expressing yourself in the theatre. The straight play can be the place for realism, and the straight play can also be the place for pretence. In my own case, I have just written a musical, and here I have blown the walls asunder, and got rid of all the conventions; there is no pretence. My stage is a stage, and things come out of the sky and market-stalls suddenly appear from nowhere. There is no attempt at realism in this and one can make a very valid point this way.

John Arden's plea for the poetic theatre is perfectly justified then, but he must not start a reaction against a form of theatre which is just as valid. This seems to me to be the tragedy of most movements; they start as a reaction from the old and not in response to something fresh that people have discovered. By all means let John Arden go ahead and strive for the poetic drama, but not at the expense of us; just as I hope we're not emerging at the expense of him. I would have thought there was room for it all. The only thing there isn't room for is bad drama.

J.P.: Surely no-one is suggesting that one type of drama alone should emerge, to the exclusion of everything else. But do you think any specific trends are becoming apparent in the plays of today? Do they have a common denominator?

A.W.: The common denominator that I have found for them all is in the word "Relevance"; they are all relevant to modern society. This doesn't mean they are all in a contemporary setting. I think that *Sergeant Musgrave's Dance* is as relevant to today's problems as *The Long and the Short and the Tall,* even though one is set in the nineteenth century and the other in the Jungle of the forties. Both writers have merely found their own ways of writing about certain issues which are confronting us today.

Perhaps this is a good place to consider how this so-called New Drama has emerged. I don't think that in any way it's technically revolutionary. There's nothing that any of us has done that hasn't been done in some way before; the way I write is pretty conventional—three acts and a recognizable set. The reason why the New Drama has emerged is a social one; the new writers have responded to certain problems of this age, and have tried to say something about them instead of just hiding away in the kind of drawing-room comedy we've been having for the past fifty years. But this isn't new; the same thing was happening in the thirties. Whatever one says about works like *Love on the Dole* or *How Green Was My Valley,* these were by people who had experienced what they were writing about, and were concerned with it in the same way that we are.

Life makes its impression on me in a certain way, so I recreate it in that way; John Arden has his own highly individual world and recreates it in his plays, his way —just as John Wain will write a novel and not a play. It's just a question of making communication on different levels.

J.P.: What do you think of the newspaper critics' influence? John Arden says "If the provincial Reps can help dramatists to disregard the inconsistencies and irresponsibilities of the critics then they are already

performing one enormous service." Do you agree with this ?

A.W.: Yes, because the critics, whether they like it or not, are as much a part of the whole lunatic set-up as any of us, and they can often do great harm to a promising dramatist. Let's take the case of Bernard Kops. He's only had one play produced, *The Hamlet of Stepney Green;* now I enjoyed this play because it was different and attempted to do something that was out of the ordinary; but before the production Bernard Kops had been built up by the gossip-writers as the boy from a bookstall in Cambridge Circus, who had risen out of the depths to become a playwright, and when *The Hamlet of Stepney Green* was put on the critics considered it their function to criticise his play in the light of the way his character has been built up. One critic even went so far as to suggest that he should never have been given an Arts Council Award. But he received this award, not because he was a genius or a brilliant writer who had produced works the world was going to remember, but because he was a promising writer who had displayed signs of a worthwhile talent. It is not the job of the critics to talk about the writer as a personality, and here I think John Arden is dead right: if provincial repertories can nourish a writer despite what the critics say, they will be doing a valuable service.

J.P.: What about provincial criticism ? Do you think it has shortcomings ? It's often said that no-one takes any notice of the provincial critics.

A.W.: In my own experience the London Press has always been eager to see what's been said; but the question of the shortcomings of provincial criticism is part of a larger question. You see, we live in a society where Art just isn't at all important. Why should the public take any notice of criticism ? The theatre's not part of their life, is it ?

J.P.: Do you think that the idea of a community theatre, where you have an art gallery and can get something to eat, may help to remedy this ?

A.W.: Yes, but there are inherent dangers. Once a centre assumes the mantle of "Culture," then it tends to become exclusive, and the kind of audience for whom this community centre was created, will be deterred from coming. The problem is that the whole habit, the tradition of "Culture is for the nobs," dies hard; and nothing has been done about this.

J.P.: A final question, John Arden's own: "How important is fame to the dramatist?"

A.W.: It's very important: not *more* important than other things, but *as* important. But this needs qualification. I would prefer to use the word "respect" instead of "fame"; fame has the wrong connotations. Neither John Arden nor any other writer that I know of would deny that respect is important to a writer. It is a sort of symbol of recognition, a sign that one is making sense and being appreciated by people. And it is important to a writer to know that he is being listened to, that he is being understood, that he is being appreciated. But you're not merely asking such a general question; you're asking "How important is fame to Arnold Wesker ?" Well, I've partly answered that already, but I think I can promise one thing: I would not compromise on what I wanted to write for the sake of fame, or even for the sake of respect. If I did then I should soon be forgotten anyway, and probably lose the respect of the people from whom I most wanted it.

Leicester's Civic Theatre

H. L. MILLIARD

A FEW years ago Leicester lost its last remaining live Theatre; and since then, apart from Leicester's thriving and virile Little Theatre, there has been nowhere nearer than Coventry or Nottingham for theatre-lovers to patronise.

In size Leicester ranks tenth in the County Boroughs of England and Wales. It has a population of 286,000 and its industries include hosiery, boot and shoe firms, and light engineering. There is virtually no unemployment—the latest figure is 0.75%. It is in the centre of England and only a two hour train journey from London. Although there is now no professional theatre, there are many amateur Operatic and Drama Societies of varying size. In fact what is commonly called culture exists, but is not co-ordinated.

Matters came to a head when Leicester was left with no live professional theatre and seemingly little hope of any revival. The time had obviously come for the City Council to give a lead. In January 1959 I proposed in the Council Chamber that an enquiry should be made into the building of a Civic Theatre, its cost, size and siting, and what support was likely to be forthcoming from the citizens themselves. This resolution was passed and a small sub-committee was formed to carry out the investigations.

It was obvious at the outset that there were two factors which were advantageous to Leicester. One was the existence of a Theatre Society which, for some years, had tried to revive interest in the Theatre. This body of theatre-lovers had tried to save the Theatre Royal (which has now been demolished to make way for an office block), it had introduced Theatre-in-the-Round to the City and in many other ways had done its best to foster interest in the live Theatre. It was clear that this Society should be consulted in the preparatory stages of building a new Civic Theatre.

The other advantage was the existence of a Civic Centre site. The Centre is to comprise a set of new buildings to house all the Corporation Departments, the Council Chambers and the Lord Mayor's suite of rooms, and the first stage of this project is to start soon.

When the Theatre Society was asked to help, it offered to produce a Report for consideration by the Sub-Committee. At the same time, the Town Clerk was asked to ascertain in what way and to what degree other towns and cities were supporting or sponsoring a Civic Theatre.

The Society's report dealt with most aspects of the problem, including sites, type of theatre, costs and conversion of existing buildings. In addition the Society offered to try and raise by public subscription an amount of money (estimated at £22—25,000) to equip the theatre internally.

The Town Clerk's report gave information about the support (financial or otherwise) which other places gave to the Theatre. Every item of information available was collated and placed before the Sub-Committee, who were then faced with these problems :—

1. Whether they were prepared to recommend the Council to support the provision of a Theatre in Leicester.
2. If they were so prepared :—
   (a) what type of entertainment it should provide;
   (b) whether it should be by new building or by adaptation of existing buildings;

(c) the extent to which the Council should be prepared to subsidise a Theatre and whether the public should be expected to share this responsibility.

(d) whether the Council should allow the Theatre to be run by a Trust or undertake the responsibility themselves.

It was felt that the City had a unique opportunity of retrieving its theatrical reputation instead of lagging behind the achievement of its neighbours. As the Theatre Society pointed out, until seven years ago, Leicester supported three professional theatres—the Opera House for touring plays, the Theatre Royal for repertory and the Palace for variety shows. It had always been a debatable point whether the shows were second-rate because audiences were too small to make the first-rate profitable, or whether the audiences were too small to be profitable because the shows were second-rate. The Theatre Society also pointed out that the Theatre Royal was making a profit (modest but not inconsiderable) before it closed down. The continuing success of the seasons of ballet and opera at Leicester's De Monfort Hall show that the City is not indifferent to good quality theatrical enterprises. Furthermore Leicester, with its environs, has a population of 400,000—during the greater part of the year there are several thousands of highly intelligent young people studying in the University and Colleges and there is a constant stream of business visitors. The result of a study of these factors was that the Sub-Committee decided to recommend the Council to build a Civic Theatre.

The next step was to consider whether to adapt an existing building or whether to build a new structure. As we saw it, this is the age of the theatre-plus. The building must be open not only at nights but during the day-time for exhibitions, lectures, recitals and debates. It must have its own coffee bar, restaurant, bookshops and assembly room. The help of the Education Authority should be sought in arranging special matinees and keeping an eye on current events. It needs to be on a central site, on a bus route and with adequate car-parking arrangements. It must be seen by passers-by and a visit must be a pleasureable social activity. In fact the era of the isolated playhouse is over—a theatre must become a place of social resort, not merely a place for seeing plays.

In view of these requirements the Sub-Committee could not recommend the Council to adapt any existing building which would, at the best, be only a make-shift job. Such a stop-gap scheme is always open to be used as an escape-hatch to avoid future civic responsibility for an adequate new building.

As regards the type of entertainment, the Sub-Committee believed that the Theatre should offer a good standard of repertory performance for the greater part of the year. The views of the local Amateur Operatic Society were considered and it was felt that this organisation should be allowed to use the facilities of the Civic Theatre two or three times a year, and there are other amateur dramatic bodies who the Committee also believe would be capable and desirous of using the facilities.

The Committee considered very carefully the views put forward by the Theatre Society in support of an open-stage flexible theatre. They were unanimously of the opinion that the public of Leicester would not respond to this type of entertainment and whilst recognising the additional cost they were firmly of the opinion that the theatre should be of a traditional picture-frame or proscenium arch design.

The City Treasurer provided a financial statement which he based on the experience of Coventry's Belgrade Theatre. An orthodox theatre with 1,000 seats was estimated to cost £285,000.

A brief statement of Income and Expenditure is as follows :—

Expenditure	£
Production Costs	29,300
Front of House Costs	45,500
	74,800
Income	
Theatre Receipts	59,400
Catering and Bar Receipts	5,400
Arts Council Grant	5,000
Leicester Corporation Grant	5,000
	74,800

It will be seen that the Council's yearly liability is estimated at £5,000, which in Leicester is about a farthing rate. It is interesting to compare these figures with comparable ones for the upkeep of Museums and Libraries in the City :—

Museums Net Rate Charge £68,000 or 3½d. rate.

Libraries Net Rate Charge £79,000 or 4d. rate.

The Sub-Committee were faced with two alternatives :—

(a) Control as a civic enterprise, administered in the same way as other activities of the Council.

(b) Control by a Theatre Trust established to run and manage the Theatre.

In the case of *(a)* the theatre would be completely controlled by a Committee on behalf of the Council. This form of management would be ineligible for a grant from the Arts Council. It was thought that if the Corporation were solely responsible for the management and running of the Theatre, members of the public would not feel called upon to give the same measure of financial support or goodwill as they would if the Theatre were run by a Theatre Trust.

It was also recognised that a Trust would more easily provide the independence of direction which was considered an essential element. In the Theatre Society there was a ready made organisation which would do its utmost to promote the interest of the public in the Theatre, obtain financial support towards the establishment and the running of it and by their various contacts ensure satisfactory attendances of the public. The Sub-Committee recommended to the Council that the Theatre should be managed by a Theatre Trust.

To sum up : The City Council decided on 24th November, 1959:—

1. That a Civic Theatre should be provided in Leicester.
2. That the management should be undertaken by a Theatre Trust.
3. That the building should accommodate approximately 1,000 persons and the probable capital cost should be met partly by the City Council and partly by voluntary subscriptions.
4. That it should be sited on part of the Civic Centre site.

In the past two decades, drama in Leicester has wandered uncharted and unplanned but at last it seems possible that a new conception of this form of art will be provided for the citizens. When it is built, the Leicester Theatre will join the New Theatre, Nottingham, and the Belgrade, Coventry, in forming an area of culture and drama which will be found nowhere in Europe. A miniature theatre

grid can come into existence which opens up exciting new possibilities in the theatre world.

The Theatre in the provinces is at the crossroads. Local Authorities are the only bodies capable of infusing the public with enthusiasm and of providing the necessary financial support for the live theatre.

In Leicester a start has been made and there is the determination that the Theatre in our City will no longer be left to the mercy of fashion.

The Young Audience

JOHN ALLEN

THE Editor of *New Theatre Magazine* has asked me to continue the discussion on "Building a new Audience" which Bryan Bailey introduced so intelligently in the January issue, only a few weeks before his tragic death in a motoring accident.

The first thing to be said is that I agree with his contentions; that I hope the policy he created will continue to be rewarded by large and enthusiastic audiences; and that I hope every other theatre in the country bestirs itself and follows suit.

These, of course, are pious hopes. Time was when I directed a Children's Theatre company under the management of the Glyndebourne Opera. We received generous support from a number of Education Authorities and particularly from the London County Council, whose policy tried to ensure that every secondary school child received a modest experience of theatre-going before leaving school. Owing to the size of London we looked for spacious theatres in various quarters. Travelling west, we hired on a couple of occasions a certain Variety Theatre for four mornings and afternoons—eight performances—when there was no regular matinee. The L.C.C. was charged £250 ! The argument of the management, now firmly entrenched in Commercial Television, was that as considerable ratepayers themselves they resented the competition — competition, mark you !—of rate-subsidized performances.

The theatre in question is now a studio of the B.B.C.

Here we have an example, which could be multiplied many times, of a blindness amounting almost to contempt on the part of commercial managements to the possibility of introducing children to the delights of theatre-going. If the children, in their day-time visits, had been made welcome at the theatre and captivated with the performance, might they not have persuaded their parents to turn the weekly family visit to the cinema into a visit to the theatre ? But no, the interest of the managements stopped short at selling fizzy drinks in the intervals and deploring the popularity of ground-nuts.

And so, throughout the country, theatres continue to close because we failed to infect the adults of today, who composed the audiences of the Young Vic and the Children's Theatre ten to fifteen years ago, with the rare pleasures of theatre-going when we had them at our mercy. No

JOHN ALLEN is visiting Australia on a UNESCO grant, to develop educational theatre there.

doubt our choice of play and standard of performance were inadequate; but so, good heavens, was the hospitality of the managements. And since many of the managements of the forties appear to be still firmly in the saddle in the sixties, we must leave enlightenment and better manners to the Reps, among the directors of which we have some of the liveliest young men with which the theatre of this country can ever have been blessed.

Bryan Bailey rightly spoke of the increasing emphasis on drama in education. This needed saying; for there are far too many people in the theatre for whom education is a dirty word, just as there are far too many teachers who believe that managers are sharks and actors exhibitionists.

I am afraid that these mutual suspicions show not only a mutual misunderstanding but a complete misapprehension of the whole nature of dramatic art.

I have recently had the privilege of seeing a good deal of class-room drama. I have watched dancing, dance-drama, mime and improvisation, creative play and I don't know how many other admirable cavortings that point to the impossibility of finding any descriptive heading for the dramatic work that goes on in Primary schools. And I know very well the point at which the professional sticks, muttering contemptuously that *This isn't theatre.* And if I reply, that theatre is not what the children are trying to achieve, he will feel that his criticism is justified; that educationalists are frightened of theatre. He does not wait to see that the children, under the guidance of an expert teacher, are making their own exploration of the world of drama, at their own pace and at their own level. It would be better if more of us were ready to explore the soul of man through the natural aptitudes of man.

In Secondary schools we find similar inhibitions. For all practical purposes drama is an appendage of English literature. We are impatient of the hesitation with which English teachers extend the security of the printed word into the hazards of speech and movement. It is an inhibition which, I understand, is fairly prevalent even in Universities. When the play goes into performance it loses place in the school syllabus. It becomes an extra-mural activity. It loses the sanction of absolute educational acceptability. And in the sixth, classical or modern, the demands of "A" level finally banish any faint lingering emphasis that might have been placed on quality of speech or style of movement.

Which suggests to the outsider that schools don't really like drama. Or simply and quite literally haven't the time for it.

But then it's necessary to remind the profession that we cannot go to the Old Vic or to Stratford-on-Avon assured that we shall hear the lines of the best dramatist in the language spoken with appreciation of their meaning and sensibility for their poetic structure. We cannot go to the West End reasonably assured that the plays we see and the manner in which they are performed will both entertain and reveal the deeps of the human heart. For the West End is one vast compromise of talent. This is because the conditions of the commercial theatre are intractable. The actor must take it or leave it as the teacher must prepare his children for "O" level whether he likes the drill or not. And the teacher says, "If this is theatre I don't think I care for it." He doesn't get a chance to hear the actors say they don't think it's theatre either.

The truth is that we are still a long way from understanding the real nature of dramatic art as a form of expression which,

by involving the measurements of time and space in a close concatenation of human speech and movement, makes man master of his environment and conversant with his own shadowy elusive nature. When we do come to understand this truth we shall see more clearly the place of drama in the education of young people — and in this context education is a glowing word—as well as the place of drama in our society.

Bryan Bailey began his article, "The professional Theatre in this country has never made any real attempt to win young people." I feel I must point out that this does less than justice to the small, perhaps, but nevertheless persistent efforts of a number of people over a number of years to create Children's Theatres. I speak of the work of the Young Vic and the Glyndebourne enterprise, of Caryl Jenner, Brian Way, John English, and many others. We have no great triumphs to celebrate; but we have defined pretty clearly the difficulties that have to be faced. It is, for example, beyond any shadow of doubt—and I must be permitted the emphasis, for there are few things in life on which I can dogmatise with such assurance—absolutely impossible to run a children's theatre as most of us would like to see them run, with a high professional standard and no children excluded through inability to pay, without a considerable subsidy. A high level of wages and a curiously popular catch-phrase, *"You've never had it so good,"* the very syntax of which gives me the palpitations, has led to the common idea that everyone can afford everything if they want it badly enough. I see no reason why the railwayman who takes home rather less than £8 should want the theatre for his child even to the extent of giving her a florin for her seat. And it takes a great many more florins than you can cram into a reasonably sized theatre to keep a children's theatre going effectively.

The whole business of children's theatres is immensely complicated and I only bring the subject up because it is a crucial piece of architecture in building our young audiences and because there is no aspect of the theatre which in the present day and age is more hopelessly beset with economic and artistic complexities. I am sure that the enquiry which the Belgrade theatre is conducting into the general attitude of young people to the theatre will be of enormous help to many companies.

I have spoken of the obduracy of commercial managements, the uncertainties of the educationalists, the difficulties of the professionals. I want to end with a few gratuitous compliments. School teachers enjoy a cloistered virtue. Few people see much of their work: it is largely unsung and unadvertised. Yet with all the limitations and frustrations besetting them, there is a far from negligible amount of work being done in this indefinable field of the drama, where ideas are given outward form and the image shape, with that rare reciprocity that clarifies the one and gives form to the other. We must refrain from saying, *This is not theatre,* until we know better what theatre is.

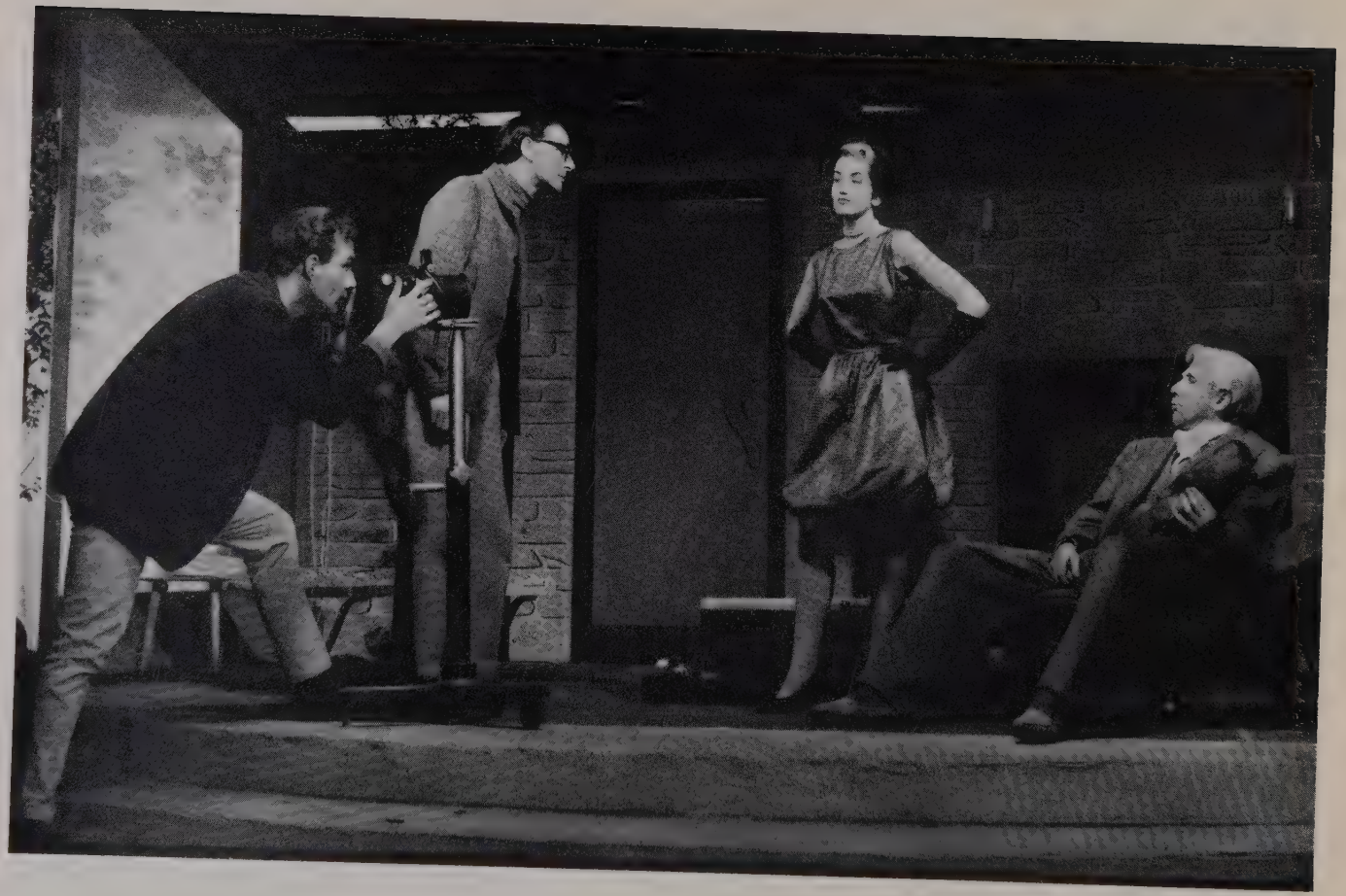
In a sense theatre people enjoy a larger and a freer air. A good many people see their work. When it is good it is deservedly celebrated. Yet in no profession is the public image so misleading. And the more I meet the actor behind the make-up, the composer behind the song, the director behind the theatre, the more surely I am convinced of the calibre of the men and women who are creating the contemporary theatre. We must refrain from saying, *This is not education,* until we know better what education is.

The Young Audience

[Photo: Angus McBean

One of John Allen's productions for the Glyndebourne Children's Theatre:
A scene from the Prologue to Shaw's "Androcles and the Lion." Decor by Joseph Cane.

Repertory in Salisbury



[*Photo : F. Davies*

A scene from Doris Lessing's play " The Truth about Billy Newton," which was given its premiere at the Salisbury Arts Theatre this year. Reading from left to right, the players are : Michael Alexander, Ian Mullins, Diana Scougall, William Hutt.

Repertory in Salisbury

REGINALD SALBERG

THERE has been a great advance in the status of the provincial theatre in the last few years and nothing could be healthier than the rise of such serious playhouses as those at Oxford, Nottingham and Coventry. Within 10 years, I imagine, there will be at least a dozen civic theatres with sufficient money and sufficient amenities to attract large and intelligent audiences. With these splendid things happening, or about to happen, there is a natural tendency to write off the small repertory theatres as unexciting or perhaps even as unnecessary. But those of us who work in them do not take this dismal view. Perhaps the history of Salisbury will help to refute it.

The Salisbury Arts Theatre Company was started after the war by the Arts Council, to serve a large area of the West Country which was being starved of good theatre. Each production played for one week at Salisbury and then toured to places such as Alton, Chippenham, Dorchester, Frome, Newbury and Winchester. Each play received three weeks rehearsal and the programme was of a high quality. It was not surprising, therefore, that first class artists were attracted to this venture, which probably reached its artistic peak in 1949/50 under the direction of Denis Carey and Peter Potter. A high proportion of that company was destined to join the Bristol Old Vic and later, incidentally, to play in *Salad Days* at the Vaudeville. In those days London Managers weren't easily enticed into visiting repertory theatres but Charles Landstone in his book *Off-Stage* describes how one such gentleman was persuaded to do so; for some time he sat in silence before exploding angrily, "But this is too good for the provinces."

However, money for the Arts was even scarcer in those days than it is now and touring was proving an expensive business. The scheme was abandoned and the Arts Council withdrew from direct management although continuing to give the Company a grant. A local Board was formed under the Chairmanship of Sir Reginald Kennedy-Cox; the rehearsal period was cut down to a fortnight and two productions were performed simultaneously, the one at Salisbury and the other on tour. Even so the cost proved too great and in 1953 Salisbury became an ordinary weekly repertory.

For some time it was perilously near bankruptcy and closure, but slowly it became more firmly established until in 1956 plans were being made to rehearse some plays for a fortnight though changing the programme weekly. Today fortnightly rehearsals are the rule rather than the exception, although this does involve a good deal of planning and extra expense.

In a city of Salisbury's size (the population is only 34,000) there is no room for a minority theatre and the choice of plays must of necessity be catholic. Hence, perhaps, the feeling in certain circles that the small Repertory is unimportant; but it fills a need in the lives of many people and this in itself is important. Nor is the serious playgoer ignored; for instance our programme in the past twelve months has included works by Robert Bolt, T. S. Eliot, William Golding, Willis Hall, Arthur Miller, John Osborne, Shakespeare and Sheridan. Five new plays have also been

Reginald Salberg is General Manager of the Salisbury Arts Theatre.

premiered during the same period. In fact, the production of new work has become a cornerstone of our policy and the choice is just as varied as is the normal programme. Four plays premiered at Salisbury since 1956 have met with a measure of success in the West End, with runs varying from 113 performances to over 500. They are *Meet Me By Moonlight, The Love birds, Caught Napping* and *Speaking of Murder.* Other sections of our public may have found more satisfaction in seeing the first production in this country of Cocteau's *Knights of the Round Table* or in the stage premiere of John Mortimer's *I Spy.* The national critics also showed enthusiasm for Lyndon Brook's fascinating study of Rupert of the Rhine, *Rogue Prince.* But to many (certainly to myself) the most exciting of all was our last premiere, Doris Lessing's *The Truth About Billy Newton,* directed by Denis Carey; Mervyn Jones writing in *The Tribune* suggested that if this play does not find its way to London all the managers who refuse it should be banished to organise fertiliser production at Runcorn. Happily it looks as if they will be saved from this dismal fate by the enterprise of one amongst their number.

It is, perhaps, this varied programme (it also includes a pantomime and a revue each year) which explains the fact that the theatre in Salisbury is still very much alive. That its standards of acting and production are still acceptable to a population trained by the Arts Council from 1946/1950 to expect really good theatre is evidenced by the fact that audiences are now bigger than they were in those days (the peak being reached in 1958 with some falling away last year). Our confidence for the future is illustrated by the fact that we are buying the freehold of the theatre lest the lease should not be renewed on its expiry in a year or two's time. We have launched an appeal for this purchase and the response has been gratifying not only from our patrons but from practically every leading actor and playwright. Here is indeed evidence that we are wanted.

Yet there is a body of opinion which would have it that Salisbury is doomed, together with all its small brethen. It is argued that the future of the theatre lies only in the splendid buildings to come. I would be the last to deny the need for such buildings and it is doubtless in them that much of the best work of the future will be done. But theatres such as Salisbury are also necessary for the future; around the big provincial centres there must be maintained a lively group of smaller repertories helping to find new actors and new playwrights and above all, keeping a love of the theatre burning in their own areas. They are important civic amenities and it is up to their local authorities to see they are kept alive.

We, at Salisbury, have a grant from our local Council of £400 for the year 1960/61. This is not quite so small as it sounds and is far larger in relation to the rateable value of the city than, for example, that given by Bristol to the Old Vic at the Theatre Royal. But it must, and will, be increased considerably over the years.

The Arts Council's grant for 1960/61 is £2,500 and one can reasonably hope for more in the future if a larger amount of money is made available for the Arts. But, as I have explained, our programme must be broadly chosen and it will be understandable if the Arts Council sees its first duty as being to those theatres concentrating mainly on experimental or classical work. I'm sure it will never deny its obligation to theatres such as Salisbury but the Council's burden must be equally shared by the local authorities. It cannot be argued that the theatre is a minority

pastime, at any rate at Salisbury, for approximately 2,000 people see most productions and the pantomime has 14,000 patrons. Remember that the population is only 34,000.

We are also helped financially by a most active Theatregoers Club which raises quite considerable sums by organising an annual dance, a garden party and a Christmas draw. It is, however, vaguely undignified to have to resort to these methods of raising money—whoever heard of a raffle in aid of the Public Library? The Theatregoers Club should be left in peace to pursue its objects of furthering interest in the theatre in Salisbury and elsewhere and to hold its very interesting monthly meetings, when it is addressed by speakers of the calibre of Harold Hobson, Sir Donald Wolfit and Margaret Rawlings.

Elsewhere industry can be of great help but, of course, there are no very sizeable firms in Salisbury. Therefore, it is to the local authority, to the Arts Council and possibly to the T V companies that we must look for assistance. How much do we need? To play the part we should in a properly organised theatrical scheme, *every* play must receive a fortnight's rehearsal and we must not be unreasonably restricted in our choice of programme by financial considerations. Nor must we ever again have to ask ourselves whether we can afford to hire a costume, wig or piece of furniture! Actors must be reasonably well paid (here we already behave better than most companies of our size, as I believe the actor is the most important person in the theatre, except the playwright). For this we need a minimum of £5,000 per annum if we continue to play to about 75% capacity, although one hopes that with increased resources there might be increased audiences.

Even more important in the effort to attract audiences would be an improvement in the comfort offered. Our seats are comparatively luxurious but new carpeting and lighting would transform our already cosy theatre. The foyer is not attractive and a visitor gains a bad impression before entering the auditorium, but money, money, money is needed to improve matters. But what we can and do offer is a commodity which needs no money—courtesy and a warm welcome, points overlooked in too many theatres.

And perhaps this is the point at which I might finish this article. For Salisbury is a happy theatre on both sides of the footlights, and this feeling is almost our greatest selling point. Audiences are conscious of being made welcome and know that the work being done is miraculous under difficult conditions. Every play—be it Christie, Osborne or Shakespeare—is presented with equal care and no actor is ever allowed to feel that "this week doesn't really matter." To ensure this, guest producers are employed from time to time, whilst two are on our permanent staff. Once repertory work becomes mere routine death is near.

A Playhouse for Cheltenham

CYRIL WOOD

CHELTENHAM Opera House, closed since last June, will re-open on Monday, May 2nd. It re-opens with a new name and a new look. A new name seemed essential. 'Opera House' was misleading as an indication of what could be expected inside; it also conjured up the spirit of the late nineteenth century when the theatre was built. The theatre of to-day must look forward, not back. It must reflect the spirit of to-day, and to-day is the age of Everyman—so we decided on the name *Everyman Theatre.*

The new look given to the outside of the theatre will be seen in the accompanying illustrations. It will be more apparent when you open the new glass doors and enter the new foyer. Ideally we should perhaps have preferred a completely new building—a contemporary theatre designed for to-day. That, however, was out of the question. The cost would have been prohibitive. Besides, there is still plenty of life in the existing building—it is sound structurally; it has excellent acoustics, good sight-lines, and a charm and intimacy not easily achieved and often absent in the architecture of to-day. The theatre, seating 800 people, is large enough for success and small enough for intimacy. Its horseshoe auditorium and its rounded circles ensure contact with the players and the stage that is more difficult in a larger building.

To allay any fears in Cheltenham that the new look may have changed the character of the auditorium, it can be said at once we have done nothing of the kind. On the contrary we have been at some pains to preserve its individuality, while giving it much-needed cleaning and re-decoration, attractive light-fittings, new curtains; and we have removed a number of hideous and unnecessary fixtures.

It is in the new foyer that the new look will be most apparent. This imaginative conception, and indeed the whole plan, is the work of a young Cheltenham architect, Derek Whitestone. His main concern has been to provide more space and better facilities in the front of the theatre. He felt, as we all did, that the tiny entrance hall (with the main staircase leading off it) was too restricting and inadequate for the larger audiences we are expecting in the future. He has taken the bold step of removing the main staircase completely, thus making it possible for the foyer to be extended to the full width of the theatre. By doing this he has further made possible the extension of the former inadequate bar upstairs, and this now also extends to the full width of the theatre. A kitchen has been installed for the serving of buffet meals, so that it will now be possible to eat and drink as well as see plays in the theatre. Provision has been made for better cloak-rooms and better box-office accommodation.

We are greatly indebted to Cheltenham and Hereford Breweries for the installation, equipping and furnishing of the two new bars—the one above the foyer, and the other at the front end of the stalls. It was a most generous and public-spirited gift, and it gives to the new look of the theatre an added quality and distinction which would not have been possible with our own limited financial resources.

We are similarly indebted to Cavendish House, Cheltenham, for a generous

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A Playhouse for Cheltenham

The Opera House, Cheltenham, as it was before rebuilding started.

An artist's impression of The Everyman Theatre which will replace the Opera House, as it will be when rebuilding is completed.

donation and for the valuable concessions in prices, as well as considerable help and advice. It is, in fact, these and other gifts from industry and business, supplementing private donations, that have made possible the restoring of live theatre to Cheltenham.

At a time when theatres everywhere are closing down with alarming frequency, it is all the more heartening to learn of one that is re-opening—re-opening, moreover, in spite of the four years of failure immediately preceding the closing of the theatre nine months ago. The re-opening has been made possible by two things—on the one hand there was local determination and persistence allied to good organisation and leadership, supporting a practical, realistic, business-like scheme. On the other was a Town Council sharply divided about its theatre, but nevertheless willing to listen to a good business proposition.

The Opera House was bought by the Town Council in an enlightened moment four years ago, when the theatre came on the market and looked like being sold as a warehouse or for its site value. This public-spirited gesture by a Local Authority was not altogether surprising in Cheltenham whose Corporation has inspired the promotion of a Festival of British Contemporary Music, and an Art and Literature Festival, for many years. The four years that followed the buying of the theatre were unhappily years of failure, dismal failure. The Council lost at least £7,000, and the losses of subsequent managements led to the closing of the theatre last June. Inevitably a number of Councillors came to the conclusion that the people of Cheltenham did not want their theatre. They felt, reasonably enough, that the sensible thing to do was to sell it, and it would not have been difficult to find a buyer and a good price. Other Councillors, however, thought differently. They felt the interests of the faithful minority who had supported the theatre up to the last moment should be considered. Feelings in the Council ran high, and views were stated with fervour; but alas, there was no escaping the box-office figures. A fervent declaration of faith by the theatre-minded Councillors, however sincere and well-intentioned, failed to convince their opponents—the box-office figures, they said, spoke for themselves. For a time it seemed a stale-mate position had been reached.

It was at this point that the first move came from outside the Council altogether. An ordinary citizen—let's call her Mrs. X—who had spent most of her life in Cheltenham, and had always been one of the Faithful Few at the Opera House, invited a few friends to tea to talk over the Opera House situation. These few spent little time lamenting the death of the theatre. They felt they must be practical. They set about calling a public meeting, to test the feeling of Cheltenham. They thought they could reasonably expect an attendance of 50—100 people. It should be remembered that the meeting was called in July, 1959, at the height of the summer (and such a summer !). It also happened to be at the time of the national printing strike which made normal publicity impossible. The meeting was made known by letter, telephone, and bush telegraph. Instead of 50—100, no less than 500 people turned up. The meeting decided three things—*(a)* to form the Cheltenham Theatre Association for the purpose of *(b)* raising funds to enable the Association *(c)* to make an offer to the Council for a lease of the theatre. An initial target of £3,000 was set. In less than a month £1,000 was raised, and the rest was thought to be on the way. On the strength of this quick success a tentative offer of a lease was made to the Corporation. It was not

accepted. The Association was told gently but firmly that such an offer was unlikely to commend itself to an opposition of practical business men. They were advised to think again.

The Committee did think again. Its members realised they knew little about theatre finance, and less about running a professional theatre. They therefore sought professional advice. The advice they received came as a surprise. They were told their target of £3,000 was useless—it must be at least £10,000. In fact, they were advised to abandon the whole idea unless they could feel reasonably certain of finding £10,000. If the money was forthcoming, they were advised to form a non-profit-distributing Company, limited by Guarantee, and that the Company, not the Theatre Association, should be responsible for running the theatre. It was also suggested that the importance of the Cheltenham Theatre Association in the future would be as a "supporters' Club," contributing funds to the Company whenever it could and, most important of all, guaranteeing regular attendance as season-ticket holders at all the theatre's productions.

The £10,000 pill was not easily swallowed. Couldn't it possibly be done for less ? The answer was a firm, unequivocal "No." The Company, they were told, was faced not only with the problem of re-opening the theatre at a time when the costs of running theatres are alarmingly high, and when theatres all over the country are closing down; it had also to reckon with the problem of living down the theatre's past reputation of failure. This would take time — and additional capital. Moreover, the Company must be able to show the Corporation that it was financially sound; that it could honour an agreement; and that its affairs were in the hands of experienced business men. Proof was also needed to convince the opposition in the Council that another failure would not be added to those of the past years.

All this time the Association was exerting all its energies to reach its initial target of £3,000. The money came in from a large number of people, mostly in small sums — some of them from outside Cheltenham. The most curious reaction to the appeal came surprisingly from a number of theatre-goers who said in one form or another, "Yes, of course I'll give a donation; but," they added, "you'll never make it, old boy ! Still, jolly good luck to you !" Others said openly they would sit on the fence until they were certain the theatre really would open. Nevertheless, the first target was reached in less than three months and, more important still, there were also signs of help coming from industry and business. In fact, £5,000 was already reasonably assured, and there were indications that, when the half-way mark was reached, some of the people holding back would then come forward.

The Association was by now satisfied that nothing less than £10,000 would ensure the standard likely to earn success. The Committee faced its formidable problem with quiet determination, and appointed a provisional Board of Directors to take the necessary steps to form a Company. This made possible a new approach to the Corporation for a lease of the theatre. During an informal talk with the Town Clerk which followed, a suggestion was made which has since proved to be the turning point of the campaign. The suggestion was for a meeting with the Mayor, the Chairmen of the "appropriate Committees," and senior Corporation officials, so that they could know exactly what had happened and what was in our minds. This meeting gave us

the opportunity of resolving Councillors' doubts and answering their questions. We found ourselves facing a formidable firing squad. Questions were aimed at finding out exactly what our proposals were for the future of the theatre; whether we were experienced, responsible business men with our feet on the ground and enough cash in the bank; and (most important) to what extent we had the people of Cheltenham behind us.

Our proposals were simple and straightforward. We wanted a 3 years' lease, at a rent which the Council, as well as ourselves would regard as economic, and with an option for us to continue for a further 3 years at the same rent or less. We offered to pay a year's rent in advance. We also wanted the Council's permission to make certain structural alterations to the building—at our expense. We wished to improve the amenities of the theatre with better bars, a larger foyer, and facilities for serving buffet meals. We made it clear we were *not* asking for any financial help from the Council. We considered it had done its fair share by buying the theatre and subsidising it substantially for four years. The most we felt able to ask was that the Council's continued interest in the theatre might to some extent be reflected in the rent they would charge us, and we suggested a figure which we felt was fair to them as well as to us.

The effects of this early meeting were felt when the full Council met shortly afterwards. The Committees concerned with our application had, in the meantime, been able to consider our proposals in the light of the facts supporting them. The result was a completely different atmosphere in the Council Chamber. An issue which had previously divided the Council was now debated as a straightforward business proposal. Confidence had clearly been established, and the motion to grant a lease was carried without opposition.

Now that we had the offer of a lease there was no turning back. We were committed—to the Corporation, to the contributors to the Fund, and to the public. A mass of practical details became suddenly urgent—architect's plans, building contracts, redecoration, lighting, cleaning, re-furnishing, staff, plays, authors, actors, technicians, all of them involving money. We began to realise they were only part of a much bigger problem. It was one thing to re-open a theatre, another to fill the seats eight times a week and fifty-two weeks in the year. We saw at once how fortunate we were in having a well-organised Theatre Association behind us, and we knew their influence would spread to others. With organised support of this kind it was obvious that a system of Season Tickets would help to ensure a *regular* audience. We knew how much the Bristol Old Vic and theatres elsewhere had benefited from Season Tickets, and we began looking for a way of demonstrating their usefulness to members of the Theatre Association.

We hit upon the idea of a Gala Performance—on a Sunday evening. It was held on 6th December last year—the last performance to be staged in the old Opera House. Ostensibly the performance was arranged to publicise the coming re-opening of the theatre. It did this very effectively, but it did something more. Over twenty celebrity artists appeared. Tickets for the performance were offered *free* to anyone who was *(a)* a member of the Cheltenham Theatre Association and *(b)* was willing, *in addition,* to sign a Form promising to buy a Season Ticket within six months of re-opening, to the value of one, two, or three guineas (according to the price of seat wanted). The names of the celebrity artists was a guarantee of a full house.

Every seat was, in fact, occupied—an audience of 800 people (a rare sight in the Opera House). That in itself was heartening; even more heartening was the realisation that the 800 people were the nucleus of a *regular* audience, and that they represented Advance Bookings of nearly £2,000.

The Gala Performance did all the things we hoped of it. It set a standard of performance and presentation which could be expected at the *Everyman;* new interest in the Theatre Association was aroused; more donations began to arrive; and people who had been sitting on the fence were now ready to sit in the stalls. For the public, the re-opening of the theatre was no longer a matter of hopeful speculation—it was a proclaimed promise.

All this time the back-room work of the Board was quietly proceeding. Problems of bricks and mortar were seen as the background of the more difficult problem of policy. We remembered the warning everyone had given that competition with television would be fierce; and we knew that a renovated theatre, however attractive, would not in itself assure a regular audience. The ultimate test, we knew, would be on the stage—the play would determine the results in the box-office. If we were to avoid the failure of our forerunners at the Opera House, it would only be because our plays and presentation were noticeably different and more acceptable.

We decided first that a town with a population of only 70,000, even though its catchment area offered another 100,000, is not large enough to support a fortnightly, much less a three-weekly, change of play. We decided we must present a different play *each week.* That immediately suggested "weekly Rep." We dismissed the idea as quickly as you could say "weekly Rep." It was out of the question. What then was the alternative ?

The answer came with the arrival of the newly-appointed Artistic Director, Peter Powell. We found he had very definite ideas on the subject. He thinks "repertory" in the hitherto accepted sense is doomed in any case. If theatre in the provinces is to survive—and he is certain it will—it must adapt itself to changing conditions. He believes the theatre of to-day must cater for the people of to-day, especially the young people. He sees great hope and promise in the younger audience as well as in the younger dramatists who are beginning to emerge.

As well as presenting new plays in Cheltenham, the policy of the *Everyman* will roughly follow the lines of the Oxford Playhouse and the Belgrade, Coventry, with modifications for local conditions. *Everyman* will co-operate with those theatres, exchanging *new* plays whenever possible. Every effort will be made to experiment with other theatres to find ways of mutual aid while maintaining individuality.

The year's play schedule at Cheltenham will consist of the first productions of *new* plays (produced by Cheltenham, Coventry, and Oxford); revivals of the more interesting of the latest London productions; classics (at least one play each term aimed at the large school audience at Cheltenham); occasional ballet; a special Christmas production; a Nativity Play in conjunction with amateurs the week prior to Christmas; and a Religious Drama Festival the last fortnight of Lent. Productions will be mainly for one week only. In the course of a year it is estimated there will be seven weeks of new plays produced by Cheltenham, 17 weeks of new plays produced by visiting companies (from Oxford, Coventry,

Cambridge, with possibly a fourth theatre). New plays will be cast and rehearsed (for as long as necessary) in London, with the cast engaged for that production only. These plays will go to Oxford, Coventry, Exeter, Cambridge, and possibly Brighton, after Cheltenham. There will be approximately 26 weeks of revivals of the more interesting of the latest London productions, as well as classics and other forms of theatre mentioned above. Revivals will be cast from a nucleus of four or five regular actors, plus special engagements. Programmes will be so arranged that *(a)* these productions have a minimum 2 weeks rehearsal; and *(b)* the "regulars" will be engaged for two "terms" and so are on the pay-roll for two-thirds instead of a whole year. The theatre will also be let for two weeks in the year to the Cheltenham Operatic and Dramatic Society.

In choosing the plays, every effort will be made to attract the under-30's, and to make the *Everyman* a forward-looking theatre, alive to contemporary trends both in artistic direction and front-of-house management. When guest producers are engaged, it is particularly desired to engage young producers.

It is appreciated by the Board of Directors that this policy is unlikely to achieve a quick success, but they have no intention of compromising this policy in the light of possible early failure. Our belief in the ultimate success of our policy has been greatly strengthened by the recent formation of the Cheltenham Young People's Theatre Association. This started quite spontaneously with a few young people —some still at school—who asked if a junior partner would be welcomed by the Theatre Association. The suggestion came in the first place from the young people themselves, and they have shewn in a remarkably short time that they have ideas of their own and are fully capable of carrying them out. They intend to give the *Everyman* support as regular playgoers and, in addition, they have already collected more than £100 for improving the amenities of the theatre. It is the intention of the Directors to use any such money for the benefit of the young playgoers—to make their theatre-going more comfortable, more attractive, and to give them as soon as possible their own coffee-bar and any other facilities specially enjoyed by young people. Special price concessions have been made for them, and they will have regular contact with Peter Powell and with the senior Theatre Association. The junior audience is clearly going to play an increasingly important part in the future destiny of the *Everyman,* and we can already discern in their Association the keystone of our future success. To the new name and the new look we now add a new audience. It is to them we dedicate the *Everyman.*

Theatre in Australia

F. H. MARES

THE London success of Ray Lawler's *The Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* made the British Public aware that Australia had actors and playwrights as well as cricket and kangaroos. The complete failure a year later of Richard Beynon's *The Shifting Heart*, in spite of — to my mind — undeservedly high praise from some of the critics, suggests that, once the novelty has worn off, Australian plays will have to be good plays if they are going to interest people overseas. Until very recently it was difficult for Australians to write plays at all, let alone good plays.

Before the cinema age began the big cities in Australia—Sydney and Melbourne —had half a dozen or so full time professional theatres each. The smaller State capitals — Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth and Hobart—had one or two, and some provincial centres like the goldfield towns had one. These theatres were commercial and popular, and most of the material they presented was imported from England; they exploited the star system, and made an occasional bow to culture by producing Shakespeare. Their profits depended on long runs. Under these circumstances there was no opportunity for Australians except in minor parts on the stage or menial offices behind the scenes. Plays by native authors had almost no chance of being produced unless they imitated London fashions, and even then to advertise them as by Australian authors would have hindered rather than helped their chances of success.

By the nineteen-thirties this situation had become a good deal worse. The low-brow mass audience was captured by the cinema and most of the theatre buildings were captured too. With the decline of the professional theatre there was some increase in the number of amateur groups and the appearance of one or two "little theatres." These at least provided an outlet for, and helped to keep alive, enthusiasm for the theatre. But, in Australia as in England, it must be stressed that amateur work can never be an effective substitute for a professional theatre.

The growth of broadcasting did provide the chance of a reasonable living to a few Australian actors, but the techniques of radio acting are so radically different from those of the live theatre that unless these actors were prepared to knock off work to lay bricks, and spend their leisure on the amateur stage, they might progress very little as anything except radio actors. The same is true of writers: the New Zealand born poet Douglas Stewart has produced several successful radio plays—notably *Fire on the Snow*, about Scott in the Antarctic—but he has not been successful in the live theatre.

At the end of the war the situation was as it was in the thirties, but there now began to be some chance of remedying it. In 1946 Mr. Chifley, the Labour Prime Minister, said "Proposals for a National Theatre put forward by enthusiastic groups will receive sympathetic consideration from the Government." In 1949, through the British Council, Tyrone Guthrie was invited to visit Australia and report on the development of the theatre there. He claimed that the commercial managements were not providing the kind of theatre that was desirable, and agreed that a National Theatre might do so. He insisted, though,

that this National Theatre must be a company of actors and stage technicians, not just an edifice. Perhaps being deliberately controversial, he went on to say that this company should be founded in London, and should begin work there. He was almost certainly right in suggesting that a company of sufficient prestige to attract large audiences could hardly be formed from Australian actors in Australia.

Whatever his intention, Tyrone Guthrie's report roused some of those who disagreed with him to action. Dr. H. C. Coombs, the Governor of the Commonwealth Bank, organised a committee of people interested in the Australian theatre, with representatives from the groups and institutions likely to be concerned.

This committee drafted proposals for the *Elizabethan Theatre Trust*. The name was designed to commemorate the visit of the Queen to Australia. The Committee appealed to the public for £A100,000 and got £90,000. (The Australian Pound is worth 16/- Sterling). The Commonwealth Government contributed another £30,000. Later the various State governments and the City Councils of Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney agreed to provide an annual subsidy of £40,000. In 1954, when the Trust was established and its finances sound, Hugh Hunt was invited from England to be the first Director.

In 1955 the Elizabethan Theatre Trust bought a theatre in Sydney, renovated it, and renamed it the Elizabethan Theatre. This was intended as a "home" theatre for the Company, where they could rehearse and try out productions before touring them through the Commonwealth. The Elizabethan Theatre was also available for lease to other companies, and so could augment the Trust's income. In fact when the renovated theatre opened in July 1955 it was with an imported English company under a commercial management presenting Terence Rattigan's *The Sleeping Prince*.

In its *Memorandum of Association* the Elizabethan Theatre Trust states its main aim as follows:

To promote drama, opera, ballet and any other art of the theatre in Australia in any way whatever and in particular and without limiting the generality of the foregoing:

(i) to promote the writing of plays, operas, ballets and other works for theatrical performances in any way whatever.

(ii) to promote the training of producers, players, musicians, singers, dancers and other theatre personnel in any way whatever.

(iii) to assist with the presentation of drama, opera, ballet and any other art of the theatre in Australia by lending or giving money, by acting as surety or in any other way whatever.

(iv) to provide or assist to provide theatres and appurtenances of theatres.

The most public side of the Trust's work is of course its productions of opera and drama. These started with Judith Anderson imported for Robinson Jeffers' version of *Medea*—a choice of play which it is difficult to account for. Later productions have been more successful, though few have been outstanding. The Trust's Australian Drama Company has not yet—or not until very recently — developed consistent standards of ensemble playing: minor parts are often weakly presented, and well known radio actors turn out to have no stage presence. There is sometimes a difference of idiom between the imported star attraction and

the local cast. The Trust has so far—no doubt out of regard for the need to establish a popular taste for the drama if its work is really to flourish—avoided the less conventional modern playwrights. Nor has the Trust been interested in verse drama outside Shakespeare. Without doubt, though, the Trust's choice of plays has on the whole been enterprising and judicious, and the standards of the Australian Drama Company have risen steadily. Their production last year of O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey Into Night* was outstandingly good, and Dinah Shearing's playing of Mary has been favourably compared with that of Florence Eldridge in New York.

The Trust's opera productions have been more successful than its plays. The staging and decor have been intelligent and original, and the operas have regularly been well sung and well acted. After seeing the Trust's production of *Don Giovanni* in Western Australia I was very disappointed when I saw it produced again at Sadlers Wells.

The Summer of the Seventeenth Doll was hailed as the first swallow of an Australian dramatic summer. The other birds have been slow to arrive. No other native play has been as successful as *The Doll* in Australia, and the only other one to be exported, *The Shifting Heart*, was a complete failure in London. The one attempt at poetic drama, Doublas Stewart's *Ned Kelly,* did not succeed in Sydney. *The Bastard Country* (alias, in the more puritanical communities, *Fire on the Wind)* was toured through the States, but was not particularly successful. This need not cause too much gloom. Lawler's play had an idea—the refusal of grown men to grow up—even if its treatment was not very explicit. He did develop, perhaps for the first time, a genuinely Australian stage idiom, and he was a very able theatre craftsman. These virtues outweighed the play's faults. Later plays have not been so good, but they have been produced, and most of them were by young writers who ought to be able to learn from seeing—and having pointed out to them — the shortcomings of their plays on the stage. At least they are more likely to learn than if their plays had never been produced at all. Thanks to the Elizabethan Trust and the success of *The Doll,* a situation now exists in which a young writer interested in the theatre knows that his efforts will be sympathetically considered, and that he has a chance of learning the craft of the playwright in his own country and in his native idiom.

The Elizabethan Theatre Trust does a good deal of valuable but less spectacular work than mounting its own productions. It has guaranteed against loss a number of first productions by other groups of plays by Australians—including, in the first instance, those which it later mounted itself. It has co-operated with bodies in various States to send its productions to country towns that would normally have no professional theatre. It has provided special productions for schools. It has given technical assistance to theatres in several States. It shares in the management of the National Theatre—a State sponsored repertory theatre—in Perth. At the end of 1958 it established in conjunction with the University of New South Wales the *Australian Institute of Dramatic Art.* It remains to be seen whether the academic misgivings voiced on this occasion will be realised. The objection is that non-matriculated students will be admitted to AIDA's two-year course in dramatic arts, and take some other university subjects; and this will, it's claimed, lead to "a lowering of standards"—that perpetual bugbear of the examination fixation.

Many people and institutions were concerned in the revival of the theatre in Australia that began to get under weigh in the 1950s, and the Elizabethan Theatre Trust is as much the fruit of others' efforts as the cause of further progress. It could not have happened if the way for it had not been prepared. A Department of Drama was started in the University of Melbourne shortly after the war. It did not thrive, but the reason was not lack of students interested in the drama. In 1953 the Union Theatre in the University of Melbourne became the home of a repertory company that has done much to develop the habit of theatre-going in that city and something to improve its audience's critical standards. The Pocket Theatre in a Sydney slum has struggled on for years, giving a chance to local playwrights and players, even fostering verse drama, and making a profit when it sold more than 36 of the 44 seats in its converted grocer's shop. Universities—in spite of their qualms about AIDA—have always supported dramatic activities, and some of the best and most experimental amateur work was —and still is— done under their auspices. And so the list could be extended. The Australian Broadcasting Commission has always taken seriously its responsibility as a spreader of culture, and has put on a wide range of plays from the established repertory, and even some avant-garde work. Its school broadcasts, too, have helped to spread an interest in drama among children.

There have been encouraging signs in recent years that interest in the theatre is spreading rapidly. A very talented young company has made a steady success —in spite of quarrels with its management and doubts about the future of its theatre —with intimate revue in Sydney. Another sign of health is the appearance in the recently established fortnightly journals—in particular in *Nation*—of good dramatic criticism. The newspapers have not hitherto provided much beyond synopsis of the plot and bouquet for the leading lady, but the careful analysis by 'Brek' of Ray Lawler's new play *The Picadilly Bushman* is something of a very different kind. If in conclusion he finds more to blame than praise, criticism of this calibre must be welcome even to the author.

But though the prospects for drama in Australia are better than they have ever been, there are still formidable obstacles to be overcome. There is the complete lack of interest of a large proportion of the population. There is a narrow puritanism that writes scandalised letters to the press about a production of *The Country Wife* or —I have it on good authority—sabotages the lighting equipment of a University production of *The Duchess of Malfi.* Though Festivals of the Arts on the whole encourage drama, the provincial small-mindedness shown in connection with the drama competition organised as part of the new festival in Adelaide does not. The competition was for a new play, the prize was £200 and performance at the festival. Three judges were appointed, all well known locally for their interest in the drama. Their first choice was considered not suitable for performance because in theme and setting it was close to another work already scheduled for the festival. The second choice, *The One Day of the Year,* was accepted. Then is was discovered that the play might offend some worthy citizens since it suggested that ex-servicemen got drunk on Anzac Day. The next play *The Beast in View* was considered too indelicate for the festival. (It has been produced in Adelaide, after rejection but before the festival, without causing any distress). Later events are difficult to

unravel. The winning play was announced in the press: *Goodbye to Number Six,* a drawing-room comedy by a retired official of the South Australian Housing Trust. The Judges publicly dissociated themselves from the choice. They had nothing against the play, except that it had not been entered for the competition.

Campus Theatre, Inc.

GLYNNE WICKHAM

If you can imagine an assembly of over two thousand 'dons' ranging in status from full Professor to Graduate Assistant, whose subject is speech, drama and theatre, congregated beneath the roof of a single hotel for four days and nights, you will have made a fair start to picturing the annual conference of the American Educational Theatre Association. The '59 Convention was held in Washington D.C., sandwiched between Christmas Day and New Year's Eve: the 1960 Convention will meet in Denver, Colorado, in August.

To a European visitor the Convention presents an astonishing spectacle. Setting as his criterion the status of educational theatre in his own country, he is tempted to suppose that the date must be April Fool's Day and this assembly the product of a brilliant student hoax. Yet if this is a practical joke, the victims appear slow in waking up to the fact. Friends exchange greetings in corridors and music-conditioned elevators; they wave to one another from tables on opposite sides of the Men's Bar where no one is allowed to consume alcohol standing: they laugh and argue in groups, large or *tête-à-tête,* in bustling Coffee Shop and palm-fringed Restaurant. In fact—as the bewildered European gradually comes to realize—these greetings and discussions are genuine enough, and the assembly is no hoax. The majority of members present, however often they may have corresponded with one another about syllabuses, students' records or play lists, have probably not seen each other since the last Convention and won't do so again until the next. Such is the geography of America. Delegates from Chicago and New Orleans have had to travel about a thousand miles to reach Washington: those from San Francisco or Los Angeles more than twice that distance. This is the one occasion in the year when groups of people, whose interest and livelihood is in teaching and theatre, can overcome the barriers that such distances present to the sharing of ideas and information of mutual concern. From an Association of over 4,000 individual members, more than half have come to Washington.

As many as twenty-four topics will be scheduled for discussion in a single day; four to six of these at a time will run in parallel with one another in different rooms, thus obliging members to make a careful selection in advance. What is it to be? Creative Dramatics; Costumes, Scenery and Budget; Directing the New Script; Open Stage Lighting; or Producing

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the Classics ? As often as not, where conflict of interest arises, the choice will be dictated by the reputation of the speakers. Each session is normally addressed by three speakers selected months earlier by the panel's Chairman. A Secretary makes a record of the papers read and of subsequent discussion.

What comes of all this talk ? That is hard to determine; for it is quickly forgotten once the whirlwind diary of events has reached its climax in the Convention Banquet (an occasion at which a variety of Merit Awards are presented) and delegates have dispersed to their own colleges to resume the semester's teaching and production routines. But the day's talks are at least discussed, often heatedly, and long into the night in bedrooms converted into night-clubs for alumni and friends. The best of the talk will be printed in subsequent issues of the American Educational Theatre Journal. Thus ideas do get an airing, a chance to circulate, to linger or vanish according to desert. Though hard to define, something positive gets achieved. The more cynical members present are likely to confide over a 2 a.m. highball that the Convention is just a job-hunter's jamboree and employer's slave-auction. "I'm finding myself a ticket to California before this party ends," as one mid-westerner observed to the writer, "another——winter and my wife's threatened divorce." More romantic spirits, if not oblivious to this aspect of the Association's function, see in it a stairway to a dramatic renaissance. To them, New York, Broadway, even off-Broadway, has become a theatrical cess-pit, corrupt in all its standards and most of its practices. Apart from the fact that New Yorkers are deemed to be parochial, cut off by shutters of their own making from the continent of which they form a fragment, the New York theatre is said to have degenerated into an 'expense account party.' The prices of theatre seats go far to confirm this view, and the present season's play list (described by one leading critic as "shabby") does little to contradict it. A wretchedly silly and vulgar play, uniformly damned in the Press, obtains a $300,000 advance sale on the strength of a film-star's début, and can thus run for months despite its notices : but a well acted and well directed Shakespeare, Pirandello or O'Neill in Texas or Carolina won't even get an inch of New York newsprint. Tennessee Williams was a drama student at Iowa—Tom Williams then—but who in New York knows that or cares what talent may at this moment be struggling to realize itself there ?

Provincial theatre, in the European sense of those words, is not a concept that can be applied within the Federation of States that make up the U.S.A.: for the theatres that exist all over the various States are forced by geography to look inwards to themselves and not outwards either to one another or to a single, metropolitan centre. Sheer physical distance and the consequent difficulty of intercommunication forbids anything else. The cynics may well have some justification therefore for regarding the A.E.T.A. as hypocritical, as staging an annual stag-party and auction mart under a cloak of academic and artistic respectability: yet is there anything seriously amiss with either of these activities once in a human while ? And even supposing that it is Dionysus and Mammon that provide the compulsive drive to organize and administer these formidable undertakings, does that eliminate the service which a period of serious discussion, however hurried, provides in linking so scattered a community of interests as the theatre in America today ? Nothing else exists to extend the horizons of colleges isolated by hundreds

of miles from one another. Thus, for this European at any rate, the dreamer's assessment of the A.E.T.A. has at least as much to commend it as the cynic's.

It is difficult to emphasize enough that there could be no theatre in America today outside New York (and very little there) without the work that the individual members of the A.E.T.A., the college and university theatres, have been and are doing. The special performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* put on by the Catholic University of Washington for the benefit of the Convention was neither better nor worse than most British university performances of the same play; but as an evening's theatrical entertainment it was certainly to be preferred to the only professional offering that the city of Washington had on show during the Christmas season, *Three Men on a Horse* at the Arena Theatre. The same is often true elsewhere. San Francisco, Dallas, Chicago, Cleveland all boast a single professional theatre doing notable work under grim economic stress, and there are a few more; but one has to scratch one's head to make the total stretch to all the fingers on one's hands. Campus theatre is amateur. It can never be anything else when the acting company consists of students: but without it most Americans would never see a play, never acquire a taste for the theatre, never provide personnel to organize and staff the amateur community theatres, the summer stock theatres, the Festival theatres and even the remaining professional theatres. It is thus of crucial importance to the future that Campus theatre horizons be extended outwards by the exchange of ideas that discussion of common problems can provide: and this is A.E.T.A's most important contribution. Doubtless it could be better, be less complacent, give more time to self-criticism, less to mutual admiration. It is easy for an outsider to be wiser than actualities allow, but even so a few suggestions can do small harm.

If twenty or more European university groups can assemble in a different city each year to present plays and to discuss them, it should not be impossible for three or four American university companies to raise the financial wind to present a play nightly to Convention delegates. Some of the more esoteric topics discussed at panel meetings might well be dropped in favour of frank critical discussions of the preceding night's performance. A programme of fewer speakers, each with a greater time allowance, must serve to focus attention more sharply on major issues of national concern than does the present multiplicity of topics presented by a posse of speakers, all of whom are denied adequate time to develop an argument that can be debated seriously. A kaleidoscope of individual viewpoints may well stimulate momentary interest in unsuspected facets of familiar subjects, but it can hardly concentrate attention on those crucial problems confronting the theatre in America as a whole today. The American Educational Theatre Association with its annual Convention and its quarterly Journal provides the virtually unique forum for the discussion of just these issues.

Book Reviews

HARRY THOMPSON

Serjeant Musgrave's Dance : An Un-historical Parable; by John Arden, Methuen, 3/6.

Traveller Without Luggage; by Jean Anouilh, translated by John Whiting, Methuen, 10/6.

a raisin in the sun; by Lorraine Hansberry, Methuen, 10/6

I HAVE rarely come across a more hostile reception by the critics of a new play than that accorded to John Arden's *Serjeant Musgrave's Dance,* which blossomed—briefly—at the Royal Court Theatre in October of last year. One critic did indeed throw a kindly lifebelt ("Almost a Great Play"). Elsewhere, the play touched off yet again the ancient debate of Entertainment-versus-Edification that seems to have dogged the drama's footsteps ever since Dionysus first pressed a grape. This particular wrangle is inevitably inconclusive, its argument being circular. On the one hand, audiences are naturally reluctant to remain long in a theatre unless they are entertained; on the other, the best sort of author will not bother to write plays at all unless he has something specific to say : i.e., a message to convey, or—if you prefer a coarse and nasty word—propaganda.

Let us then at least allow Mr. Arden this, that *Serjeant Musgrave's Dance* is in intention a considerable play, eschewing those themes of contemporary insignificance dear to the West-end stage. In it Mr. Arden treats not merely of war and of militarism, but of the enduring problem of human guilt and its proper assignment—a pretty extensive subject, and one that has from time to time exercised not inconsiderable minds. I suggest therefore that if *Serjeant Musgrave's Dance* fails to satisfy, its deficiencies arise out of the extremely high level of technical and literary accomplishment demanded of its author by the scope of its theme and the imaginative amplitude of its setting.

The much-berated first act of the play is admittedly slow. In an attempt to establish character, create atmosphere and record exposition, while yet not giving away his game too quickly, Mr. Arden not merely holds his cards close to his chest but in effect fails to play them at all. The result, not surprisingly, is as much one of mystification as of mystery. However, the play springs into life with the central scene of its second act and then moves with growing pace towards what is probably the most remarkable climax in the contemporary English theatre.

It is therefore a great pity that *Serjeant Musgrave's Dance* does not achieve the dimensions of an artistic whole. One unbalancing factor, I feel, is that Mr. Arden's visual sense is so precise that his verbal images tend to become blurred in comparison. He seems to think in a series of dramatic tableaux, so effective as to overshadow his dialogue. What dialogue, indeed, can readily compete with the precise visual connotations of a Gatling gun and the suspended skeleton of a dead soldier ?

However, it says much for the intensity with which Mr. Arden sees his own particular vision that I barely paused to ask myself how four deserting soldiers could manage to transport to "a snowbound Northern town" not merely the remains of a former comrade killed overseas, but also a large quantity of what are, I believe, called "Warlike Stores," including the aforesaid Gatling gun—a Final Weapon which in its day must have been just as dear

to the hearts of Authority as is the modern ICBM and as jealously guarded.

Of *Traveller Without Luggage* there is little to say except that this is an early play —a *pièce noire*, written in 1936 — by a dramatist whose theatrical sense it is rarely possible to fault. *Traveller Without Luggage* has, in fact, everything that one has come to expect of Anouilh : economy in dialogue, mastery of exposition and well-nigh immaculate skill in development—with, in this case, one of the author's most formidable Great Ladies thrown in for good measure in the character of the Duchesse Dupont-Dufour, as purposeful, as uncompromising and as invulnerable as a battleship.

a raisin in the sun, Lorraine Hansberry's play about the life of a poor Negro family of tenement dwellers on Chicago's South-side is frankly a puzzle—not in itself, but in so far as it emerges winner of the New York Drama Critics' Circle Award for 1958-59. The play touchingly portrays the struggles of people who have suffered much and are entitled to their bitterness against the world and even against one another. Unhappily, the author's development of her theme is surprisingly predictable, and her dramatic technique suggests little more than might be due to a copious assimilation of the principles of composition that John Van Druten recommended to aspiring playwrights and which he himself so dexterously employed. *a raisin in the sun*, therefore, is undeniably effective in detail—but overall it appears to me to lack the stature one demands of a critics' award winner.

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